

## Strategies for SAT Multiple Choice

### **Basics:**

Process of Elimination- look for the wrong answers

Scoring: it is like this- you get a raw point (dollar) for every right answer, nothing for a blank, and minus one fourth (25 cents) taken away for each wrong answer. Your total score is a total of the raw answers (the dollars) for each section category: math, critical reading, and writing. Each is scaled to a 200-800 score.

Write on the booklet. Cross out incorrect answers, etc.

The questions are ordered into groups of easy, medium and difficult.

Don't spend too much time on a super confusing question.

On the easy questions, follow your instincts; on the difficult questions, do not choose the answer that looks right.

### **Critical Reading Section:**

#### **Read the instructions**

There are 3 critical reading sections. They each contain sentence completion and reading comprehension.

Only the sentence completion section follows a definitive order of difficulty

#### ***Sentence Completion:***

To practice, cover up the answers and see if you can come up with the right word. Then see if one that is similar is in the list.

Underline any clues

Look for trigger words; same direction: because, and since, a colon, a semicolon; change direction: however, but, rather, yet.

Look for clues that the words might be either positive or negative.

### ***Reading Comprehension***

Read the instructions

Questions based on reading passages and answering questions make up about 70% of the critical Reading section

*Read anything in italics carefully*

*Read the questions first*

*Read and translate the question*

*Go to the passage and read until you find the answer*

*Answer the question in your own words (in your head)*

*Use POE (process of elimination)*

Don't choose an answer just because it reminds you of something in the passage

Don't choose the first answer that seems correct

Vocabulary in context questions should be treated like sentence completion questions

Don't answer something that is not in the passage

Don't answer half right, half wrong answers

Look for hints (lead words) in the questions

Fetch questions will ask what something means and often ask in what line

A reasoning question will be a two part question (the author mentions... in order to...)

Extreme language: Statements that are absolute or might offend will be incorrect

General questions: main idea, primary purpose or tone

You might want to do the general questions either after you have figured out the main idea of the passage, or save them for last

If it is too long or too difficult, skip it

With dual passages, simply follow the italicized steps above

With short passages, read first and translate into your own words

Weaken/strengthen questions:- make sure you know the main idea, determine which side ETS wants you on, use POE, and determine what sort of answer choice would help your side

Inference questions: use process of elimination

Author agree/respond questions: get the main idea of the passage, and figure out what the author would most likely agree with. Use Poe

Passage pairs: use POE, read carefully for the main idea

Literary device question: you need to know the terms

Analogous Reasoning questions: match a situation in a passage with that in a question. Figure out only the type of situation or relation, don't worry about the details.

Except questions: eliminate the answers that are not supported by the passage

If the passage seems super technical, very specific, or long and detailed, it there is a good chance that this is kind of a trick to confuse and frustrate you... as well as make you waste time. THE ANSWERS TO THE QUESTIONS WILL NOT BE ALL THAT HARD.

## **Grammar Section**

Basics:

There will be one short and one longer section that will test grammar

This section does not follow any order of difficulty

Don't base your answers on what *sounds* right or wrong. Most people don't speak grammatically correct

Go through the section twice. Get the easy ones out of the way first.

The *improving paragraph* questions are almost always the easiest

**Error ID questions:** 20% of these types of questions will have no errors, so don't be afraid to choose *no error*

The problems will be one of the following: sentence structure, verbs, nouns, pronouns, or prepositions

Sentence structure problems will most likely be problems with clauses

-An independent clause can stand alone

-A dependent clause (subordinate) clause cannot stand alone

Run on sentences are common

Comma splice sentences are common

Sentence fragments are common

Verb problems will be one of the following: agreement with the subject, parallel structure to the other verbs in the sentence, or is it in the same tense as the other verbs

The only thing you will need to know with nouns is agreement (subject/verb)

Pronouns: do they agree in number with the nouns? Is it clear which noun it replaces? Is it a subject (I, you, he, she...) or object (me, you, him) pronoun?

You guys are likely to have trouble with the prepositions. Just go with what you think is correct. Or skip it

The **improving sentences** part tests the same type of grammar

In this section you will also find:

Faulty comparisons: many/much, fewer/less, number/amounts

Two vs. more than two= more/most, less/least, better/best, between/among

Misplaced modifiers= every time he uses the bathroom outside, John praises his puppy

Adjective and adverb= because of the devaluation, my fortune decreased tremendous.

## **Improving paragraphs**

Look at the questions first in this section

The three types of questions you will be asked to do here are:

To revise a sentence, to combine two or more sentences, or to insert a new sentence or paragraph as a way of improvement

Think about what the author is trying to say

Pay attention to the logical flow of ideas

Avoid ambiguity and wordiness